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Japan and Manchuria

A Reply

to

Mr. Yosuke Matsuoka

Formerly Vice-President of the South Manchurian Railway

by

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A REPLY TO MR. MATSUOKA

BY SHUHSI HSÜ

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The Chinese delegation to the Kyoto Conference of the Pacific Institute certainly owes Mr. Matsuoka a reply now that his Combined Round Table speech on Manchuria (which was supposed to be for the information of the delegates alone) is being circulated.

The Chinese Spokesman's Address

Mr. Matsuoka's Round Table speech is in a way an affirmative refutation in a debate, the supposedly presentation addresses, affirmative and negative, being the speeches made by him and his Chinese colleague in the Open Forum on Manchuria held in the Conference in a previous day. In the Open Forum Mr. Matsuoka read a paper on the past and present of Manchuria, showing the audience how through peace and order, which he claimed Japan had maintained, and the fostering care of the islandic empire the population in Manchuria had increased by almost two-folds and trade expanded to a tottering high figure. His Chinese colleague who spoke after him took stock of the idea. He pointed out that Manchuria was protected from the turmoil of civil war inside the Great Wall mainly by its geographical position very much like Shansi in its relation to the great Chinese plain to the east and south ; and that so far as local disturbance was concerned, the troops which Japan maintained along the South Manchurian Railway, though menacing enough to Chinese sover-

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eighty over Manchuria, placed that group of provinces in no better a position than the rest of China where Japanese military influence was absent. He also reminded his hearers that population movement from Shantung and Hopei northward had acquired a momentum long before Japan established herself in Manchuria, and that trade expansion was a feature common to all parts of China and not peculiar to any particular section.

Having made the foregoing observations the Chinese spokesman went on to declare that China was not neglectful of Manchuria, but had been prevented from doing her part. He described how China had planned to develop the vast regions lying east and west of the South Manchurian Railway and north of the Chinese Eastern Railway, not served by these two railways, and how no sooner than China moved to launch the projects, Japan had come forward to obstruct her. He reviewed the history of the years following the Russo-Japanese War : As soon as Japan came on the field, she tied a financial string to every Chinese railway enterprise east of the Liao that she could not take over, and then directed her energy to prevent China from building the first projected line, which was to run from a point on the Peiping-Mukden Railway to Aigun on the Amur by way of Taonan, the centre

of Eastern Inner Mongolia, and Tsitsihar, the capital of Heilungkiang. When China decided to start the line from Hsinmin on the Liao river, she protested on the vague ground of its being parallel to the South Manchurian Railway. Later, when China tried to avoid complications by moving the terminus 176.3 kilometres southwestward to Chinchow, she again protested on the more strange pretext of its contemplating "a very important departure from the terms of the treaty of Portsmouth." Finally, when the

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Chinese Republic was established, she exacted as price of recognition a promise relating to the financing of a network of railways, which not only rendered it practically impossible for China to launch any of her projects, but also served Japan as a starting point for further exploitation. The speaker paused from time to time to ask whether Japan was as solicitous of Chinese welfare as she was represented by his Japanese colleague to be, and on every occasion he had to declare in the negative.

Adopting a new line of approach, the speaker said that China was thankful for all Japan had actually contributed towards the advancement of Manchuria, but asked if the price China had had to pay for such had not been too high. He resumed the review of history: The Chinese Revolution broke out and was soon followed by the European War, resulting respectively in the weakening of the Chinese power of resistance and the diversion of the attention of the Powers from the Far East. Under these circumstances Japan did not hesitate to adopt a "positive" policy with reference to Manchuria. Within three or four years she had already succeeded in forcing one Chinese government to accept the Twenty-one Demands and inducing another to take the Nishihara Loans. It was through these strokes that she was able to securely establish herself in South Manchuria and further extend her control over the rest of that group of Chinese provinces. The world situation then changed with the termination of the European War, and Japan was unable to repeat her coups. Nevertheless, she did not fail to build upon the foundation she had laid, and proceed to tighten her economic and financial hold upon Manchuria on the one hand, and reach out for the

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control of its political destiny on the other. He cited as instances for the latter, as he went along, the various acts of intervention during the Kuo Sung-ling Revolt of 1925, the Nanking-Mukden War of 1928 as well as the subsequent negotiation for peace.

Having reviewed history, the Chinese spokesman said that Japan had accepted in advance as full payment for her service the right to succeed to the twenty-five-year lease of Port Arthur and Talienswan and the thirty-six-year concession of the South Manchurian Railway originally granted to Russia, and a new fifteen-year concession for the Antung-Mukden Railway. Then he asked whether there was any justification for Japan afterwards to demand the extension of these grants to ninety-nine years, or to contrive to secure what practically amounted to a monopoly for the railway development of Manchuria, or to use the railways as bases for policies that ran counter to the rights and interests of China, especially those affecting her sovereignty.

Mr. Matsuoka's First Four Points and Replies

In the meeting of the Combined Round Table Mr. Matsuoka made five points in reply to his Chinese colleague. In the first he still claimed credit to Japan for the comparatively peaceful condition of Manchuria. Speaking of the Japanese troops stationed along the South Manchurian Railway, he said that although they were only a handful, "it should be borne in mind that the Japanese government, with its powerful navy and army, was standing behind them." As if not enough, he went on to tell us how Japan had been so solicitous of the welfare of Manchuria as to go out of her way to help that group of Chinese provinces out of difficulties. He had the

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following to say :

Even with my limited knowledge, I can count on my fingers more than half a dozen occasions where war or disturbances either actually broke out or were in danger of doing in Manchuria itself or in its relation to China Proper that lay beyond the Great Wall. It actually happened two or three times. But for Japan's influence, or for that matter even pressure, we would have had witnessed more internecine wars or disturbances.

What Mr. Matsuoka claims does not necessarily contradict the point made by the Chinese spokesman, the point that the geographical position of Manchuria protects it from the civil wars inside the Great Wall. The latter does not deny that Japan has repeatedly interfered with the internal political development of China especially with reference to Manchuria. That has been felt even in places where there are no Japanese troops, not to say Manchuria where one is constantly reminded of that "powerful navy and army" of which Mr. Matsuoka speaks with so much pride and satisfaction. He only points out that the geographical position of Manchuria in its relation to the rest of China has been sufficient for its own protection from the civil wars raging elsewhere, and that our friends from the islands should have spared themselves their concern, still less claim credit for the situation.

We are, however, grateful to Mr. Matsuoka for the statement admitting Japanese intervention in internal Chinese political development. Hitherto we could only infer this from circumstantial evidence ; from now on we have the facts from the personal testimony of one of the most important actors of this international drama ! One cannot help in this connection

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asking by what right is Japan justified in her conduct with reference to Chinese internal political development. Can it be legal in nature ? We are not aware of any, whether contractual or on the basis of general principles. Can it be moral ? Perhaps Mr. Matsuoka will immediately think of the profits of the millions of dollars as represented by the South Manchurian Railway, rather than the political destiny of the millions of human beings that inhabit Manchuria. Perhaps he regards that group of Chinese provinces as clustering round a Japanese railway, instead of taking the South Manchurian Railway as a foreign concession on Chinese territory.

As to that symbol of that "powerful navy and army," without going into its legal basis, it may be pointed out that Japan's solemn promise to remove it from the soil of China* is six years overdue, and that there is hardly any danger for Japan to live up to her pledge, since the removal of the symbol will not affect a whit its substance.

The next two points of Mr. Matsuoka's can be dismissed without much discussion. One is the fact of Manchuria's being a new country is responsible for the rapid increase of population. This is precisely what his Chinese colleague would have him see and therefore calls for no comment. The other point is that the charts which his Chinese colleague produced in the Open Forum in connection with the assertion relating to the growth of trade are not necessarily dependable. Mr. Matsuoka went on to prove his point by the following statement :

Those among us who have had some-experience in handling statistics and graphs need not be told what the art of charting

*See Additional Article II, Peking Treaty, December 22, 1905.

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is capable of. Without tampering in any way with the figures themselves, you can produce a chart or diagram conveying quite an erroneous impression. It's a trick well known to the profession of handling statistics and graphs. In no way do I mean to say that (my Chinese colleague) was otherwise than bona fide itself, but I am merely pointing out that such a thing is done in Japan now and then, even purposely to get the better of the simple minded people.

Perhaps it is unnecessary to say more than that the charts in question were prepared by an authority on economics after painstaking research on the subject, and brought by the said authority to the Conference independent of the Manchurian discussion and with no desire to get the better of anybody, least of all such an expert on the art of charting as the ex-Vice-President of the South Manchurian Railway.

In his fourth point Mr. Matsuoka attempted to induce us to believe that Japan had not blocked Chinese railway enterprise in Manchuria. He cited as an example the case of the Hsinmintun-Fakumen Railway, which he claimed to have handled at the time. He said that Japan's motive in that case was only to prevent China from violating what he alleged to be an engagement on the part of China not to lay any parallel lines to the South Manchurian Railway, and started by the way to accuse the Chinese government of purposely keeping the engagement secret in order to embroil Great Britain and Japan. He ended by declaring that personally he held that barring "temporary or political motive" "to-day there is, or could be, not, and cannot be, any difficulty over the question of parallel lines to the South Manchurian Railway," because "conditions and circumstances change as time moves on. What was

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regarded as a parallel line twenty years ago cannot be said necessarily to remain so to-day in the light of the great development and changes that have taken place in Manchuria since."

To start with, it may be observed that Mr. Matsuoka was somewhat too limited in citing only the case of the Hsinmintun-Fakumen Railway to prove his point. We wish he had gone further to enlighten the audience as to Japan's motive in opposing the Chinchow-Aigun Railway scheme, as well as in casting a network of railway projects over Manchuria in 1913 as soon as American participation in Chinese loans was withdrawn for the time being. Evidently, the Hsinmintun-Fakumen Railway case alone is not enough as he declared for proving that "Japan at no time ever antagonized or blocked any scheme of China with foreign capital."

Concerning the Hsinmintun-Fakumen Railway case, perhaps we can best let the Chinese government itself answer. Speaking of Japan's claim during the controversy, the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs had the following to say in a note to the Japanese Minister in Peking* :

Your Excellency refers to the minutes of the Sino- Japanese Conference, and declares that the Chinese government has disregarded her engagement and taken action prejudicial to the interest of the South Manchurian Railway. Probably your Excellency is not aware of the fact that at the time the plenipotentiaries of China and Japan discussed the matter, the plenipotentiaries of China maintained that the word "parallel"

*Hsu Shih-chang: Documents relating to Manchuria (in Chinese), Vol. II, Page 49.

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was too comprehensive, and that it was necessary to give distance, in miles, stating definitely that within so many miles no parallel line could be constructed. The Japanese plenipotentiaries, however, thought that if the number of miles were fixed, it might create the impression in other countries that there was an intention to restrict Chinese railway enterprise. The Chinese plenipotentiaries then asked that the number of miles between the parallel lines be fixed in accordance with the practice of Europe and America. The Japanese plenipotentiaries said that the practice was not uniform and that no statement was necessary. And they added a declaration that Japan would do nothing to prevent China from any steps she might take in the future for the development of Manchuria. The declaration was made in all sincerity and with consideration for the interests of a friendly nation. This is what we both ought to observe.

Judging by the foregoing statement the claim is not as substantial as Mr. Matsuoka would have us believe. Perhaps he was entirely honest. But in view of its important bearing he might like to be more critical. When he was only a young secretary in the Japanese Foreign Office, it was his duty to prosecute the claim as given to him rather than to question its basis. But now, if he wished to be critical, he could afford it.

There being no such undertaking as claimed, the Chinese government could not have purposely kept it secret to embroil Great Britain and Japan. It is nevertheless unfortunate to hear talks of this kind.

Take the case of the Triple Intervention in which Russia, Germany and France "advised" Japan to restore the Liaotung peninsula to China in exchange for thirty million taels on the ground that otherwise northern China would be under the domination of Japan and the independence of Korea rendered illusory. Take again the case

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of the American proposal to "neutralize" the railways in Manchuria by vesting in China the ownership of the railways through funds supplied by the interested Powers. In either of these cases was it Chinese diplomacy or rather Japanese ambition that embroiled Japan with the Powers? To think that the United States and Russia was at the beck and call of the Chinese government! Does one realize that this pays too much a compliment to one party and shows too little respect for the other? We can readily sympathize with those who would like to have Japan and China exist in a world by themselves, so that one can exploit the other to her heart's content. But that is not possible under present circumstances. It is therefore no use to be irritated by the presence of third parties.

The question of parallel lines to the South Manchurian Railway, of course, can be treated on a moral basis. China would be unfair besides foolish, if she were to lay tracks side by side with the South Manchurian Railway. But could she be considered in the same manner, when she proposed to build a trunk line from the Liao to the Amur by way of Chengchiatun, Taonan and Tsitsihar, of which the HsinmintunFakumen Railway formed only the starting point? The very fact that the section from Chengchiatun to Anganchi, little way south of Tsitsihar, had since been built by Japan for China shows that there were other motives than the economic that underlay the objection to the Chinese project. Such motives only betrayed themselves to the public later, first in the case of the Chinchow-Aigun Railway project, and next in Japan's attempt to cast a network of railways over Manchuria.

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Mr. Matsuoka's declaration that there can no more be difficulty over the question of parallel lines to the South Manchurian Railway is reassuring in spite of the fact that he carefully called our attention to the fact that he himself was responsible for the declaration; or that his views concerning conditions twenty years ago, on the change of which he based his opinion, was contrary to the judgement of the British and American financiers, who were prepared to support the Hsinmintun-Fakumen and Chinchow-Aigun Railway schemes. It would have been the more reassuring, if in making the declaration Mr. Matsuoka had not felt necessary to exclude "temporary or political motive," thus making bare the fact that after all China's path in railway enterprise in Manchuria might not even as from now on be strewn with roses as the main part of his declaration may lead one to believe.

Mr. Matsuoka's Fifth Point

The fifth and last is the point on which Mr. Matsuoka devoted most of his efforts. He started by categorically informing us that Japan had not had enough out of Manchuria and then proceeded to

justify the stand by Japan's sacrifice. This he put down in two items : "first, one hundred thousand men killed and wounded ; second, two billion yen in gold, or roughly one billion American dollars" for which, he declared, "China hasn't paid a cent !" He further attempted to strengthen the Japanese position by asserting that what Japan had got she "got from Russia, not from China."

Speaking of sacrifice, one may be permitted to add those made by Russia and China. These may be put down in five additional items : first, at least an equal number of innocent

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Russians ; second, at least an equal amount of good rubles ; third, an unknown number of innocent Chinese ; fourth, an unknown amount of good Mexicans ; fifth, an immeasurable amount of peace and happiness which the poor Manchurian peasants would have otherwise enjoyed. Of course, Mr. Matsuoka might not be expected to think of these. But evidently even with what he had in mind he must have been quite conscious of the fact that he came close to condemning his own country instead ; for while acquisition is greed even with sacrifice, if it means dispossession of others, sacrifice is barbarity, so long as it involves human lives and happiness.

Whatever this may be, Mr. Matsuoka called to his assistance a number of what he described as fundamentals. He supplied us with "mileposts" of Manchurian history : (1) Li Hung-chang's astuteness, (2) the Triple Intervention, (3) ten years of Japanese humiliation, (4) the Sino-Russian defensive alliance, (5) Russian "sweep down Manchuria," and (6) the Russo-Japanese War. Then by a curious kind of historical method he not only ascribed the Triple Intervention and ten years of Japanese humiliation to the astuteness of Li Hung-chang, but also inferred a relation among all of the cited events in the following fashion :

Remember this (the Triple Intervention) happened in 1895? And in 1896, that is the very next year, in May it was, that the Li-Lobanoff agreement was signed — a Russo-Chinese Secret Alliance Pact was concluded, and Russia started to sweep down Manchuria on its southward movement ! This led to the Russo-Japanese War.

On the logic which carried him thus far Mr. Matsuoka began to dwell extensively on the Sino-Russian defensive

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alliance, accusing by the way the Chinese government for failure to produce the full text of the alliance as promised by the Chinese delegates to the Washington Conference at the time a synopsis was registered. He spoke of how during the Russo-Japanese War Japan "felt truly sorry that she had to fight it out with Russia in the territory belonging to neutral China," and while the sentiment of the audience was thus worked up, went on to say:

My friends, suppose Japan had known, during the war or right upon its conclusion, the existence of this secret alliance treaty, what do you think the result would have been ? Knowing, as we do, the world temper or atmosphere in those days, I am afraid, Japan would have certainly had taken the

whole of South Manchuria and no nation would have said a word about it. And we would not have had the Manchurian Question to discuss at this Conference to-day.

So far so good. But Mr. Matsuoka appeared to be somewhat uncertain of himself when he reached this point. He might be confident that the audience accepted his way of correlating historical facts. But he must have felt at the same time that they might not agree with him as to the way he used the correlations. Even should the alliance be as diabolical as he would have them believe, evidently it could not be used to justify Japan's attempt to get into Manchuria, since she was represented to be ignorant of its existence. Then if it were to be used to justify Japan's intention to stay on, it would cause Japan to go on the basis of vengeance, a basis which could hardly square with the good side of human nature. At any rate, as if to counter-balance the effect, Mr. Matsuoka hastened to introduce a new "fundamental," the "fundamental"

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of fear, or national security as he preferred to call it. He asked whether his Chinese friends could guarantee to Japan that China would not produce another Li Hung-chang, and then passed on to speak of the "comeback" of Russia, which, he declared, would take place "in the not very distant future" irrespective of "whether a second Li Hung-chang appears on the scene or not." He, however, did not develop further, but concluded by the following statement :

Unless China is prepared to give some satisfactory assurance as regards this vital question of Japan's national security, Japan would not, I am afraid, be able to see her way through to modify so easily, and light-heartedly, the attitude she has hitherto taken.

Reply to Mr. Matsuoka's Fifth Point

Two minor questions that have been raised by Mr. Matsuoka incidental to the discussion of his fifth point may be disposed of first. One relates to his accusation of the Chinese government for failure to publish the full text of the Sino-Russian alliance. He may be assured that there is no bad faith intended. We have been informed on the subject by one whose authority we see no reason to question. According to him the text that was cabled to the Washington Conference for registration was all that was in the Waichiaopu, and if the Chinese delegation did make a promise regarding a full text, they must have been misled by the briefness of the text they received into thinking it was only a synopsis.

Another question relates to the assertion that what Japan got she "got from Russia, not from China." The most important tangible fruits of the Russo-Japanese War are perhaps the twenty-five-year lease of Port Arthur and Talienwan, the

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thirty-six-year concession of the South Manchurian Railway, and the fifteen-year concession of the Antung-Mukden Railway. The last mentioned was granted by China in Additional Article VI of the Peking treaty of 1905. The first two were transferred by Russia to Japan in Articles V and VI of the

Portsmouth treaty with "the consent of China," which Japan afterwards secured in the Peking treaty with the solemn engagement that she would earnestly observe the original agreements respecting them. Mr. Matsuoka's assertion can not be borne out by facts.

In discussing the central theme of Mr. Matsuoka's fifth point we may first ask whether Li Hung-chang was justified in cooperating with Russia under the circumstances of the time. We may next ask whether the policy, irrespective of its justification or otherwise, was responsible for the Russo-Japanese War and, if not, which was responsible. Finally, we may ask whether it was justified to make the sacrifice or entertain the fear both of which Mr. Matsuoka had spoken with so much emotion. To answer these questions we have to follow his example by going into history.

Question A. In 1867 the political change in Japan known as the Restoration took place. Within but a few years Formosa was invaded, Liuchiu annexed and Korea repeatedly bullied. Formosa as we know was then a part of the Chinese province of Fukien, while Liuchiu and Korea were two of the nations that acknowledged Chinese suzerainty. It was with a great deal of difficulty that Japan was induced to enter into the Tientsin convention of 1885. The condition that was most fraught with danger of conflict between China and Japan as developed up to that time was the maintenance of troops by

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the two countries in Korea, Japan in pursuance of her right granted by treaty to protect her legation at Seoul, and China by virtue of her suzerain duty to assist in the suppression of internal disturbance. The parties being bent upon peace, it was agreed in the convention that both withdrew their troops from Korea; that they would notify each other in case they should in some future time find it necessary to despatch troops again ; but that they would withdraw such troops as soon as the cause for their despatching ceased to exist. A period of harmonious relation followed. But no sooner than Japan felt that she was strong enough to enforce her desire, she returned to her former policy. When China answered the call of Korea to render her military assistance in the suppression of a new rebellion, Japan also despatched troops to Seoul ; but when the rebellion was over and China requested her to withdraw troops simultaneously, she not only refused to carry out her solemn pledge but even forced a war upon China by proposals which only a defeated nation could accept.

In the ensuing war Japan was the victor, and in the traditional fashion she made China pay the following penalties for her unpreparedness : (1) abandonment of her century old vassal to her fate ; (2) an indemnity that almost crippled her financially once for all ; (3) an "unequal" commercial treaty in place of one on a reciprocal basis ; (4) cession of the Chinese populated Formosa and Pescadores. But was this all ? No, not yet ! She did not hesitate to add (5) cession of the Liaotung peninsula south of a line roughly from the mouth of the Liao to the mouth of the Yalu, a region that was not only Chinese populated, but was also so strategically located that its occupation by an alien invader in practically

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all instances in Chinese history had led to the conquest of either northern China or the entire length of the country to the South China Sea.

There was a time China thought that Japan meant to clip only her outlying territories. Now she saw unmistakable signs of designs upon her national existence. She had woken up to realize that what had hitherto looked like Asiatics playing the role of Europeans were really but the Mujungs, the Nuchens and the Manchus of the past incarnate. Should Li Hung-chang sit down and watch the eventual overrunning of China by the Japanese, or should he accept the Russian offer of cooperation to prevent the consummation of the process? We are very much tempted to put this question to Mr. Matsuoka and let him have some material to exercise his fair-mindedness.

Question B. Justified as it might be, China's policy of cooperation with Russia may yet be responsible for the Russo-Japanese War as Mr. Matsuoka would have us believe. To this let us now turn.

In 1884 while China was drifting into a war with France in defence of another vassal state in the south, the second coup d'état of the time in Korea took place. Judging by the prominent part played by the Japanese legation in Seoul on the side of the rebels, Korea came to the conclusion that her islandic neighbor was making an attempt upon her national existence, and as the suzerain was fully occupied in attention elsewhere, she hurriedly appealed to Russia for assistance. Thus long before the Sino-Japanese War Russia had been led by Japan's action to interest herself in Korea. Russia's interest unfortunately took the form of an attempt to lease Port Lazareff.

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This in turn incited Great Britain to occupy Port Hamilton. Afterwards it took China a great deal of time before she succeeded to persuade one to evacuate and the other to declare that she did not entertain any territorial ambition in Korea.

Primorskaya was no less a neighbor to Korea than the Japanese islands. If Russia was willing to keep off the peninsula herself, she would naturally like to see that none else would get in. When Japan was forcing the war upon China, Russia, like Great Britain, offered good offices to bring about an amicable settlement; and when war actually broke out, both stayed aside to let the parties fight it out. There was evidently no choice to them between Korea remaining a Chinese vassal and Korea becoming independent. But when Japan annexed the Liaotung peninsula and thus rendered the independence of Korea illusory, Russia parted company with Great Britain and decided upon intervention. If Japan feels humiliated, she has herself to blame. To ascribe her own blunder to the skill of Chinese diplomacy is to credit China with what she hardly deserves.

The condition of China after the way she was laid low by Japan proved, however, too tempting for Russia. At first Russia merely asked for a concession to build the Chinese Eastern Railway as a measure to facilitate the defence of Primorskaya then menaced as well as Sino-Russian military cooperation in case Japan staged a comeback. Such advance China could neither reasonably nor expediently turn down under the circumstances of the time, and the result was the conclusion of the secret agreement on which Mr. Matsuoka has laid so much emphasis. But as time wore on Russia became bolder. During the scramble for concessions started by Germany

she extracted from China the lease of Port Arthur and Talienwan with a concession for the South Manchurian Branch. When the Boxer uprising spread to Fengtien, she effected the occupation of Manchuria from the Amur to the Yellow Sea. Her disregard of Chinese rights and her own international obligations was so fragrant that China was eventually compelled to repudiate the alliance by a declaration of neutrality when war broke out between Japan and Russia. If the Sino-Russia alliance could be held responsible for the Russo-Japanese War, we might as well put the blame also upon the existence of such as Manchuria, the Japanese people, or even air, earth and sunlight, for the irrelevancy of the latter is evidently no more extraordinary than that of the former. Concerning this point an eminent Japanese authority has the following to say :

Not only in Japan, but also in other countries it has often been felt that China was responsible for the Russia-Japanese War and for Japan's consequent management of Manchuria. This is based on the opinion that the war was forced on Japan by the agreement of 1896 between Li Hung-chang and Lobanoff. Those who hold this opinion contend, therefore, that China has no right—certainly no moral right—to protest against Japan's management of Manchuria. It must be admitted perhaps that this argument concerning China's responsibility for the Russo-Japanese War is more hasty and provocative than convincing* .

Provocative, indeed, it has been to the Chinese people ; and we may add that it must have come near to be a reflection

*Masamichi Royama: Japan's Position in Manchuria, p.11.

upon the intelligence of any audience to which it was addressed. Mr. Matsuoka declared that Japan would have annexed the whole of South Manchuria, if she had known the existence of the alliance. We certainly believe him, if he means to impart to us her secret craving. Judging by what she did both before and after the Russo-Japanese War, she would have annexed Manchuria outright, had the international situation been favorable or had Russia been laid as low as China, with or without the Sino-Russian alliance. On the other hand, if he means to say that was what should happen, we are afraid he will find response only among the unwary.

If Mr. Matsuoka insists upon knowing which is responsible for the Russo-Japanese War, he will make no mistake by turning to the policy of those who guided the destiny of the Japanese nation in the preceding decades. It is difficult to tell what Russia might have done if not for Japan. But it is a plain fact that Russian activities either with reference to Korea alone in the eighties or to both Korea and Manchuria in the nineties were in each occasion roused by Japanese ambition. Even in the case of the war itself, a casual examination will be enough to reveal that if Japan had not desired it, Japan could have easily avoided it. Russia is justly condemned for her lack of faith and her foolishness. But

to be fair one can not ignore the fact that in the months preceding the war she did make a sincere effort to accommodate Japanese wishes as well as world opinion.

Question C. What then have we to say about Japanese sacrifice and Japanese fear ? Concerning the first a few words alone are necessary. We have observed that sacrifice is barbarity as long as it involves human lives and happiness.

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Of course, it is more abhorrent, if it was also made with little justification or none at all. Our sympathy rushes out to the dead, their aged parents, young widows and orphans. Mr. Matsuoka will have done a great service to humanity and some justice to these unfortunates, if the discussion started by him will contribute to rouse the interest of the public, until they will see to it that such tragedy will not be repeated in the future.

Speaking of fear, especially in reference to Russia, the Chinese with their past experience have abundant sympathy for their Japanese neighbors. But we submit that if the Japanese were willing to be contented with their islandic home, they would have little to worry. Think of the scenic beauty, the natural plentifulness, the economic prosperity, the social stability and one hundred and one other blessings our Japanese neighbors are enjoying ! Think of the fortunate position of the islands which are near enough to the mainland for the exchange for whatever they lack, and yet distant enough to be protected from any alien invasion ! How many nations in the world are in such a fortunate situation ? If the Japanese could only apply some of the scientific knowledge they have acquired in recent decades to the solution of their population problem, they would become the most happy people in this mundane abode of ours. Why bother about Korea and Manchuria in exchange for worry about Russia ?

We have spoken enough about the modern period to need to say that all conflicts Japan has had with the outer world are initiated by the Japanese themselves. Let us now again follow Mr. Matsuoka's good example in quoting history. We have heard a great deal about how Japan was menaced by the

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Mongols and how she was saved by a typhoon. But this is the only instance in history in which she had to entertain fear of an alien invader. Furthermore, in this she was but one of the victims that lined the Eurasian continent from the Pacific to the Danube and Oder ; and, it must be added, quite a fortunate victim at that, for while China, Russia, Central and Western Asia were conquered, and Poland, Hungary and Silesia were made battlefields, the Japanese shore was hardly touched. Outside the Mongol incident, one would scan history in vain to discover another of similar nature. On the contrary, one found that Japan formed once and again a menace to her neighbors, such as at the time when she just emerged from her tribal stage to become a nation state, and at the end of the sixteenth century when she fell into the hand of the foolhardy Hideyoshi.

Mr. Matsuoka's fifth point, therefore, can not in the least stand examination. Japan drove China by her designs upon her national existence into a rapprochement with Russia, and then cut in to get what she wanted from her when Russia turned treacherous. The world will have plenty of admiration for the cleverness of Japan, but only the unwary can accept the explanation on the basis of barbaric sacrificial and fancied danger. The more astounding fact is that with all the energy that had been put in, Mr. Matsuoka did not answer the question raised by his Chinese colleague in the Open Forum—the question whether Japan would not confine herself to the price originally exacted for the self-imposed task of driving Russia out of South Manchuria. If her limit is where she cannot go any further rather than what she might contribute to the peace of the world, say so frankly. It is hardly necessary for her

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to feign injury. Greatly though China had suffered in the hands of Japan through the Sino-Japanese War and the train of disasters that followed in its wake, her only thought afterwards was reconstruction and not revenge. In the Peking treaty of 1905 she granted without murmur practically all Japan asked of her in South Manchuria either as it referred to the old concessions to Russia or to the new concessions freshly brought up. It is but proper for the Chinese people now to raise their voice of protest against the continuous advance made in the last two decades and a half beyond these grants, and to plead with their Japanese friends for the rectification of the injustice or, failing this, leniency. But what has Mr. Matsuoka told us? He has told us that Japan is not yet satisfied with what she has got out of Manchuria! At this we can not conceal our disappointment. For our consolation we can only hope that Japan does not lack fair-minded men, and that such sentiment as expressed by him is not representative of Japanese public opinion.